

Kanagers:The coming part nine

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Summary: I finally finished, part nine, I just continued it....

Kanagers:The coming part nine

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Author's note;Sorry it took for long, but I was kind of busy, incase you forgot I came to the part were Rachel confesses that Devils was taking drugs.

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[PART NINE]

_THE COMING _

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CHAPTER FIFTY-FIVE

Devils

"You drive me craze, since I saw you-" Rachel stopped again and looked uneasily at me.

I kept my face emotionless, I mouthed the words 'don't' silently. Staring ahead.

__"She never told me why." Rachel said looking away from me; I had buried my head between my knees,

"She didn't tell me why she takes drugs."

My life ended, if I were to be sold in a slave market people will get me for free, only they'd reject me. I felt worthless.

Although my head was buried between my knees, I felt all of them turn around to stare at me. All of them now knew what Rachel knew. Ax knew this too. But he decided to keep his promise; I told him to forget he ever spent time inside me.

"_What?_" Julian snapped, "Is this true?"

I felt Salix, Guttani and Max edge away from me. I closed my eyes tight, _go away, go away, go away, go away, go away, go away_

_"I saw her." Rachel said, "I asked her why and she never told me." _Screw you, screw you, screw you, screw you, screw you, screw you_

_"You what?" Jake asked.

Why are you upset? Is Devils ill? Dagmar asked, _ _

No one answered her. I could only guess why. What would an alien think if it knew that it had been led by a junkie, trash, waste. Inferior garbage.

Me, Devils. A girl so strong and prideful could be snapped down to looking like shit and living like compost

I don't want to think about what my friends think of me now. I know, it's not my fault I'm a junkie but. But I feel betrayed. I feel like I betrayed them. They were so used to seeing me in control, the girl who couldn't be shattered from the outside got shattered from the inside. They were used to chilling out and relaxing while I was still alert. It was what normal would be. And Julian? I suppose he figured out why I was so downcast

And yet part of me kept nagging me, kept telling me that I wasn't over it. That I wasn't over what the Yeerks had done. I was still recovering.

"I don't understand." Julian said, his voice wavering, "Why? That's totally opposite of what you are." He ended sadly.

Why don't you tell him why? Asked a voice in my head. From the tone I could tell it was private. Also I could tell that no one heard it because no one reacted.

I could also tell that the thought spoke belonged to Aximili. My gaze locked onto his. _I can't, _I whispered to his brain-something I could do but never bothered telling anyone about, why? Because it's unreliable, sometimes it works other times

_I fear they would not believe me. _

They will. I ignored it. I was afraid of telling Julian that it was the Yeerks, mostly because of the reaction that would come, and I admit, that I was afraid of that. In fact

I was very afraid of his reaction. Julian could get over protective. I didn't want him to hurt for me.

"Devils," Cassie said, I could tell that she figured it out, "Was itâ€¦ Was it the Yeerks?"

I closed my eyes, I very slowly nodded my head.

I put a hand on my throbbing temple and fought back the emotions that were surfacing; the painâ€¦the anger. The rage against the tortureâ€¦

No, I hadn't got over it. I hadn't got over what the Yeerks did to me. I thought I did, but I was wrong. Maybe ignoring the fact that I spent two years with the Yeerks was getting to be bad ideaâ€¦ I didn't even tell my friends what happened! What was said and what wasn't said! There were a lot of new things I learnt about the Yeerks.

But, wasn't that part of forgetting about what happened? By, not talking about it? Is that the way to forget?

I would have gone past it. Really, I would. Only, there's this little thing that keeps reminding me, nagging me, telling me that the Yeerks did give me a hard timeâ€¦ The heroinâ€¦.

A physical reminder was the other thing that brought back the memories. I now had one good eye. The other was useless; all because of Xiang and Visser three, and the Andalite attack, the little task force that was destroyed. The Andalites still had time to come; they still didn't make an appearance.

"Why didn't you tell us!?" Yelled Julian, "We could have helped you!"

It's not like I'm dieing, I contradicted what he said silently, I don't need your help, and I don't need anybody's help. I'm independent. I refuse to be dependent. People depend on me but I never depended on themâ€¦ I never do that! I would feelâ€¦ vulnerableâ€¦and that was a feeling I was allergic to.

"You know, you could have just told us what happened," Guttani, my so called best friend said, "Instead of running off when we tried to save you."

Pity, pity was the other emotion I hated. I rarely come across it, I'm not used to being pitied because I lead a solitary life; the animals rarely show pity, they have a profile that did not know of the word pity, 'the unmerciful' may as well be their agenda.

Sympathetic? Forget it. It just doesn't happen. "Look Mr. Leopard, let me go and I swear I wouldn't try sneaking into your territory and having a go at your prey sorry, I wouldn't repeat it, No, honestly, cross my heart and hope to dieâ€¦" It just does _not_ happen.

Guttani, my best friend, or as close to any human being that tried to understand me. Really, she was only a friend, almost like an acquaintance. Nothing great and solid it's very normal relationship. What wasn't normal was that sheâ€¦ oh well, understands me better than the others. And get along well with her. Just don't throw me in

a mission with Rachel and Salix. These two will actually team up against me, the nerve!

Julian? He's another tale, for another time. I just don't feel like talking about him at all. Why? Because I was weary around him these days. My guard would be up. Like me, he was also unpredictable; those deep blue eyes; like mid-night, his white hair and the wild grinâ€¦|.

"You guys never asked!" I screamed suddenly, getting up. Generally surprising them all, including myself; very weird for me to start an act of hysteria.

I tried to get a grip on myself but part of me was racing too madly. They didn't care! Hey just never asked anything about me! It was as if the only thing they wanted to do with me was fight; then forget that I so much as existed! God! They just didn't know anything about me, my past, they knew nothing about me. And it made me mad even though-strangely- I didn't want them to know about me. I just didn't expect them to act as if I was the invisible wall! At least make an effort to ask! My brain screamed at them. But I never voiced my complaints. No, I was not going to tell them any of that, no way.

"But you give us no chance to ask!" Guttani yelled at me, I could see that she was scared.

With good reason; I was looking daggers at them all. Something I never did. It was as if the very mask I had kept on my face evaporated. I showed them, for the first time the real me, I showed them what I was inside; this will be an experience they will never fail to remember.

Sometimes they forget. They forget that I wasn't one of them. That I didn't think like them. Sure I was human, but there is a significantly big difference between them and me. I was raised in a different culture, a culture they could only dream about. Very little was known about me, and to them, I was very unpredictable.

But, if one of my cousins were here, they would have had no real problem guessing at my reactions.

Guttani had sensed that something had just snapped, something about my relationship with them, my friends, at them, at all humans. I felt hatred against mankind himself, I always had. But never this strongly, the only person here that knew that I wasn't very excited about fighting for my race was Julian, but, that doesn't mean I'll sell out humans. Never. Sure I hate them, but I can't just pretend that I have no duty in saving themâ€¦| no matter how reluctant was. Julian doesn't seem to under stand this part of me. The part that hates humans, and yet fight for them.

It's simple really, lets take it to small scale, lets say you hated your father, lets assume. Or brother or sister. You fight them, they get on your nerves, but when a stranger comes in (lets say step mother or father, or some enemy) and threatens to destroy them, you'll stand up to them correct? After all, they are your own flesh and blood you'dâ€¦| betray them.

Why can't he take it this way? I just can't understand. He thinks I'm a lunatic animal lover, and he's wrong. At times I despise animals. I treat them so ill manner thatâ€¦ well, it's terrible, but I get mad sometimes, and sadly, I am confined to be in the more _'sadistic'_ side of human nature.

Andalites, they think that by studying us they would understand us. Uhuh, we don't even understand each other. Now, you're telling me that a pack of pushy aliens are going to actually understand our insane switches of behavior, mood and attitude?

Pulllezz!

Let them just forget about understanding us, I'd think of them as wise that way.

But, in generally, Andalites and Yeerks are stupid. Homo sapiens aren't stupid; we just don't get along together. That's it, no tolerance.

The Andalites think that _we _are stupid, well, as far as thoughts would go; all Andalites are morons. Emotionally stupid as well they're just pathetic.

And I should know, I've spent time with them and they aren't impressive.

But I'm biased; when you spend time with them, you tell me _your_ opinion, and then try proving me wrong.

"Didn't give you a chance?" I whispered, my voice low and harsh, "_Why_ should I? You just tell me one reason to why"-my voice getting louder as I spoke-"Why I should ever give you a chance, jeez, I'm not the one who walks around and think that one of the people they live with is nothing but an INVISIBLE WALL!!!"

I was glaring at Julian, he had hurt my feelings (wait a second, do I even have feelings? Sometimes, I like pretending, or just creating bad situations. Yes, I am a lousy person.) But some part of me, the part I keep burying down, on and on and on, was screaming in emotion. As I spoke to the _friends_ in front of me, I kept emotion out of my voice, my face blank; my words cared anger, but neither my voice, nor my eyes carried any emotion at allâ€¦ gives off an illusion of sortsâ€¦

This was one of the main reasons to why they feared me; to them I was emotionless, just dead. But at times, rare times I do show a spark of emotions. That's when they are afraid of me, I had proved to be unpredictable andâ€¦murderous.

I do live up to my nickname. Not that I'd ever tell you my real name. Why? Good question its because I just want to _forget_ who I used to be. I never was this coldâ€¦ Who is? Something had to happenâ€¦

Unfortunately. Not all of my friends understand this. Sigh.

"Gee, Devils, we never knew you felt this way!" Max said, "You practically never talked!"

"You know what?" I snarled, "I think I'm wasting my time!"

"Devils!" Julian cried out,

I spun around and bolted out of the room, stopping for a moment; realizing that I was running out of my house to find comfort. _Running out of **my**_ _house for comfort, _I repeated the thought bitterly_. _

_ _I resumed my run and fled into the dark of the wild to hunt. It was already hunting time, it was dark and no moon was out to perfect, just perfect for good easy prey. I need concentration and patience. I may be having dinner today, I smiled to myself, life wasn't that bad after all.

I bounded deeper into the wilderness hoping that I would find a satisfying mid-night snack.

Also hoping I wouldn't become some other animal's snack in the process.

Now _that_ killed off some of my excitement, some, not all.

I turned and faced the wild.

Also prepared to lose myself in it for the time being.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-SIX

Julian

My head was boiling in emotions, too many that had surfaced too fast, too fast for me to comprehend and handle. I sat; overwhelmed by the sensations.

Fear. Distress. Anger. Hatred. Disgust. Annoyance. Guilt. Shame. Pity. Regret. And beneath that all, beneath it all was the most powerful emotion of all love.

That was repelled by the other emotions. Kept closer at bay, too strong to be flushed out. Yet too weak to become the dominant emotion. Yes, my heart still ached for her. It always had.

And that part of her, the one that I saw had sparked my love for her, gave life to the love that had been fading.

And below all of that was sorrow, sadness.

I couldn't think straight. I couldn't.

Devils? Drugs? No way. It never should have happened. Devils and loss of control? That was like violence and technology, or electricity with water. None of those mix together. They don't, they aren't made to _be._

I also felt scared, for Devils, mostly.

Devils lives a wild life and we all know it. What if her concentration was broken in a middle of a hunt? Prey or not the effect could be terrifying, especially since Devils likes to take a bite out of Zebras. This is very dangerous. Knowing that Zebras are very strong, fast andâ€¦ they bite. I've seen lioness have it because they attacked a Zebra. It happens. Not all lioness are a version of 'O-mighty predator' Devils taught me this.

She had had said that lions and lioness need to learn. The older the mother, the better experience they will advantage out of her An experienced lioness is a better mother that one that know _zilch_ about hunting. Even if the mother was a good sitter, hunting is what counts. And for hunting you need skills, and lots and lots of experience. Devils said that experience could be painful at times. I never asked how.

I also worry about her, not the first time.

I was always worried if Devils would always come back in one piece after a hunt. The world could revolve around and suddenly. Poof! You're the prey being chased. And it had happened. It once killed Devils. And I know that the others worry about that too. Wicked or not, that Devil was an okay person to have around.

I looked at my friends, who all looked shocked,

"Iâ€¦ I don't get it," Cassie stuttered, "Why would the Yeerks want to use drugs on her?"

"She must have held out for a long time, I guess they wanted to crack her bad. â€¦" Max muttered.

"What kind of drugs?" Jake asked, looking as if he was in a trance.

"You're telling me that we've been lead by a junkie!!!" Marco exclaimed.

I stared at him, my eyes never got a chance to lock on his, never got a chance to give a warning.

"I don't believe this! We've been-"

Marco was interrupted by a little, minor fact; I was strangling the life out of him.

"Ugh! You-Ugh maniac. Ugh! Madman! urgh!" He chocked out.

"Hey!" Max yelled, "Take it easy man."

I felt his hands yank me off Marco and I wrestled with Max for a

while, we were equally strong.

"Stop." Jake said quietly, and we did. Strange seeing the guy stop the fight with out breaking his neck, but then again, that's Jake for you.

"Why didn't you tell me this sooner?" He asked Rachel, his voice low and silky, like the way it was when he was really angry.

"Look, I knew just a few days before, it doesn't matter, now you know."

We sat in silence for a long, long time.

"We have a mission guys." Jake said tiredly, "We have to figure out the snake thing. Umm, Any bright ideas?"

I glanced at the Andalites and Tobias, they had barely spoken in the outburst. Which was normal; the Andalites took it as human business and didn't want to be involved and Tobias well, he keeps things to himself. That's the way he is I guess.

We stayed for an hour thinking up of stupid ideas. We were getting no-where. I sighed leaned back and closed my eyes, feeling fatigue hammer me.

"We couldâ€¦ dig a way into the Yeerk pool?" Cassie suggested lamely.

"We could _just_ forget about it." Marco said.

"Or we could do something about it, ever thought about that?"

I spun around; there she was, standing by the entrance of the room. Like nothing happened calmer than she was a few hours earlier.

"Why don't we morph the snake and see what happens. Or. We could let it loose and see what it does. Where it goes."

That's not a bad idea! I thought, much better than what I would have come up withâ€¦ I'd have expected Cassie to come up with such a solution, but she seems out of it. Tired.

"We'll do that tomorrow," Devils said, taking charge. I wasn't reluctant about it. Maybe Jake was, but he was keeping quite about it.

"You guys need some rest." They slumped out of the room all of them except Jake, Devils and me.

Jake glared at Devils, "Was that responsible?" he said, not all so calm now, the 'I'm in control and cool' mode could be shut off since all the other were gone. It was like behind the scenes. We stood in a circle. Glaring at each other.

In circumstances like this, Jake was the head voice.

"Not really, but the situation is hopeless, we are fighting and we are outnumbered by about a thousand to one."

"Don't talk like that!" Jake snapped at Devils, "There is hope, no matter what happens. Don't you forget that."

Devils leaned close, "Hope is your way of playing the game, remember that I do not indulge with that concept. I have no faith in hope."

"Yes, I know that, but just because you don't believe in hope it doesn't give you the right to flame other peoples beliefs."

"Yes," her voice was a harsh whisper, "It does."

Jake looked like he was ready to punch her. "Jake, forget her. Devils. If you haven't got anything good to say then say nothing at all."

"Excuse me!" Devils snorted.

"Why are you in such a lousy mood?" I looked into her eyes, "No wait, just tell me what happened to you when you were with the Yeerks."

"Nothing much." She leered at Jake.

"Is that all of what you're going to say?" Jake demanded.

"Uhuh that's all I'm going to say, wana make something out of it-" I grabbed her by the throat.

"Listen to me," I hissed at her, "Don't push it. Don't try to get on the nerves of my buddy here! You better tell him what he wants, I respect Jake, you too should respect him as well."

She looked, taken back. Surprised, that was probably the first time I surprised her.

She started to say something, stopped, started to say another thing and ended up with saying nothing.

"I thought so." I said

"Look," Jake said quickly, the situation was awkward to him "I was just want to know what happened, I have family and friends to take care of. Devils, we are the only resistance on earth."

"Nothing happened," She said staunchly, you got to admire the girl, she takes in no kind of apology, "Really," she said, more openly.

We looked at her.

"I'm not lying." She said.

"We believe you." Jake said finally.

"Now," I said cheerfully, "About the snake thing."

Jake turned around and made to leave. Devils looked like she was going to follow.

He turned around "Enough working out for a day."

"Last thing." I said,

Jake looked at Devils reluctantly, "You lay off tomorrow, me do the responsibility act, you got that?"

After a few moments of thought she nodded, looked him in the eye and said, "Yes. I understand."

It would be rare for her to break a promise like that, maybe Jake didn't know it, but that was Devils way of making a promise that she wouldn't break.

Jake nodded.

We arranged it all. Should have been something simple, should have worked out, only, like all the other things that happen around here, the plan just blew up in our faces. Typical.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-SEVEN

Marco

I'm slithering. Tobias laughed.

You know guys? This is seriously not funny, I almost got chomped by him, know I'm suppose to follow him? I said.

Common, weenie boy, Rachel said, He's moving.

Where do you think he's going? Jake asked,

The Yeerk pool, duh. I said.

We were snake slithering our way across the ground it was dark. Cassie said this was another thing to worry about; nocturnal snakes, snakes that can move when they are cold. Good, give me some more good news.

Hey there are more of them! Max said.

See? More good news gets better and better doesn't it?

Ah, life of a superhero where life is one big game.

Not.

I kind of noticed that as well, Julian said. Wow, will you look at

that!

It was more 'yikes!' then 'Wow! Will you look at that!'

Snake pit; thousands of snakes creeping about in one big hole. All of them were coiling, slithering or hissing, it was a strange eerie look.

Jeez! What a lot of snake! Jake said in awe.

It looks a lot like medusa's head only with a thermo-gram reading. I muttered.

The snake that had attempted to bite me earlier united with its comrades.

What are we suppose to do? Max said, somewhat nervously, Join in?

Uhuh. I said cheerfully, The snake hang out, they'd properly want to see our ID before we go in, you know, to see if we're underage.

In that case, I'm sorry guys, I forgot my ID, see you tomorrow! Max said.

Max? Salix said.

What? He said.

Stay. Salix and Rachel said in unison.

Okay, whatever you want. He muttered.

Here doggie! Here boy! Come' here boy! Hey! _Ma_x? I said sounding annoyed, You missed your queue, you're suppose to bark.

Very funny Marco, He said sarcastically, Remind me to laugh, later.

Stop it guys, we have a mission, remember? Julian said.

A what? A mission? Sorry man never heard of it. I replied.

Marco? Jake asked sounding irritated.

Okay. Okay. I'll shut up, I said. Then as an after thought I added, For now.

They all groaned.

I reluctantly entered the mass of withering snakes.

Okay, so what do we actually- Tobias started to say.

ZZZZZZZZINNNNNNNNNNEEEEEEE

What the?! Jake cried.

A loud vibration-slash-sound collided into my body. Yes, I say

collided because all snakes around we were stunned stupid. And I too was just as immobilized.

Hey! I can't move! Rachel yelled.

I do not think that any of us are capable of moving right now Ax commented.

When the sound stopped the snakes moved, they moved down the snake pit and disappeared.

Okaaaaaaaaay. Jake said I'm thinking we should follow.

Yeah? I said, And why should we?

It was not my best argument.

I lost, as all ways.

But I insisted.

Don't you need someone to hang back? In case you get in trouble? Then I'll come and have your sorry-

No thank you Marco, Julian said, We are very capable of doing that, besides, Devils is the back up she's staying behind, and come on the rest went in.

We went in and we were swallowed by darkness.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-EIGHT

Rachel

I used my snake body to enter the cavern. I no longer knew which individual snake was one of my friends.

Look!

I saw Visser Three and five human controllers. They were talking about the snakes we just morphed.

Whoa! Cassie said, You heard that?

What? Julian asked.

These snakes are designed to strike on humans, releasing enough toxin to knock out the victim, they say they're going to release it in a town hall meeting about protecting elephants.

Huh? Where? Max asked.

The comity meeting you Dodo, Salix said, The one held in our town!

You didn't have to call me a Dodo, Max muttered.

Oh, that one, Julian said, Huh? What comity meeting?

Oh lord help the gifted, Salix moaned.

Marco is excluded from that list. I cracked.

Uhuh, Rachel, very funny. Ever considered- He was too easy.

How about we just concentrate on what we should do? Jake interrupted.

Okay. Marco said. I was just getting bored.

Get bored some other time. I said.

Hey, guys? Are you hearing what I'm hearing? Cassie said.

What is it?

Whoa! She yelled

What? What? Whoa what? Jake cried out.

The Andalites are here! They say thatâ€¦ She paused.

That what? I asked.

Wait, I'm listening to him speak. Cassie said, then she continued, They say that they changed something in these snakes, they programmed them to attack Andalites, in hope of capturing a few of them and infesting them-

Impossible, Dagmar snorted, They wouldn't be able to do that!

Why not? They're doing it to humans. I said.

They can't, they just can't.

Uhuh, I said dryly Wake up, this isn't fantasy land we are in a war, and in wars anything is possible.

Well, they have one Andalite controller, Ax said, They are certainly not going to have another one.

Look, Jake said, This is all fine, but don't you people think we should do something about it? You know, other than sit and yap about it.

And your plan? Oh-fearless leader. Marco teased.

I'm thinking we should find the base for this operation, or what they use to control the snakes and destroy it.

BOOOOOOOM!

Suddenly, a cheer ran out from the caged human hosts. The humans, the ones who were free for a few moments while their Yeerks basked in the pools were cheering.

Usually, they'd be crying, yelling or sitting silently. But today there was something new, there was defiantly something new.

With my snake eyes and tongue, I managed to recognize what just happened, identify what had come barging through and into the Yeerk cavern.

It was, an Andalite fighter.

Hey! Marco yelled, Is that what I think it is?

It's an Andalite fighter! Ax yelled.

They are here! Dagmar cried happily.

Hey, hey, hey! Jake said, Don't forget; we are in the middle of a mission here, you haven't forget about that have you?

Of course not. I said. So what do we do? Stand there waiting till something happens?

No, we don't we are going to-Ax! See that wall the Andalites blew down? What the hell is that? Jake said.

That? Ax said with a laugh, Prince Jake, I believe we found the control room.

****_CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE_****

Devils

Standing outside, I heard people cheer, I heard an explosion. What on earth was happing back there?

I felt myself get a little excited, may be I am going to fight today, maybe there would be a chance for me to hurt the Yeerks.

I got ready to enter, but paused, remembering what Jake told me. He told me to sit this one out. And Julian told me to respect him.

I hated Jake, I didn't respect him, and I was starting to get made at Julian. I turned around and headed to the spot where my comrades dropped me, I sat down and sighed.

The only thing that got me to come back here was my promise, I gave Jake my word.

I grabbed a twig and started drawing pointless patterns on the ground. I'm an artist, only Julian and Guttani know this, I loved to sit down and draw.

But I don't draw anything, nope. I have this particular interest in wildlife. I hate drawing man made structures, I hate drawing people.

It's a challenge, drawing the animals and try to make it as life like

as possible. I only achieved this by five years of merciless training. But what was there to do? Other than face the wild, I could do something useful.

I had this secret place, somewhere near the Hork-Bajir valley I helped to create. In it I keep my artwork. And inside this place, I â€œout of curiosity- bega to draw aliens, I drew Hork-Bajir I drew Andalites, I drew Taxxons, Geds, SkitNa and a whole bunch of others.

And then stashed deep in this secret place was portraits and drawing of my family members. They were still there, I didn't move them. In the Kanagers base, all the paintings my friends see where either done by me, or two of my brothers. We where the only three who were interested with drawing, the rest of my huge family were interested in seeing the masterpieces.

My head snapped up, I heard screaming, I stayed reluctantly back. Repeating what Jake said. I heard a grizzly roar, a wolf yelp, a leopard growl a gorilla scream.

The battle was going badly for them, not that I cared, let them beg me to come back I'm not bulging.

I went back to the patterns, they represented a floral pattern, with swirls here and there. I smiled myself.

The hair on the back of my neck rose, like when t always did when I had this feeling, this feeling of somebody or something watching me. I looked up, maybe they came.

Nothing, the feeling went. I bent my head down and resumed. Far off I heard a tiger roar. That would either be Jake or Julian.

Something was bugging me, I didn't know what, but the skin on the back of my neck prickled and so did the skin on my arm, goose bumps ran all over my arms. I jumped off the rock I was standing on, I froze completely, I scanned the densely thick vegetation and got nothing, I stared ahead and let my concentration come to my ears, I strained to hear anything.

What was wrong with me? I sat down. I closed my eyes and tried to easy my nerves.

I opened my eyes again and started to walk. Just to make sure that there was no one around. No Hork-Bajir, no human controllers, not Visser three in a morph.

I heard a sound behind me, it stopped when I whirled around.

Nothing, nothing. It was too dark and when I came close to where I thought the sound came from I saw nothing.

I turned around.

That was the biggest, most stupid decision I ever made. It almost cost me my life.

I had been worried about aliens and for the first time in my life I

had forgotten that there was something bigger to worry about, something more fatal than a salad shooter or an overgrown centipede.

I had forgotten about the wild.

And forgot my place in the food-web.

ROOOOOOOOOAAAAAARRRRRRRR!

My legs turned to jelly, my heart stopped beating, every single cell in my body tingled with electricity. Adrenalin flooded my system. Blood rushed to my brain and my brain started screaming.

My body shriveled in fright, I decreased in size, the natural reaction to fear. My muscles froze as I stared at the huge creature that was sprinting towards me.

Stripped demon orange and black intelligent cold-blooded yellow eyes. What attracted my attention was her carnivores, they were long, yellow and dripping with saliva. All this happened in a fraction of a second.

I unfroze spun round and bolted. I felt the leaves on which I had been on get disturbed slightly. The tiger was a silent, brutal predator. There are times when I existed in more than just one tropic level, why do you think they changed food chains into food webs? The answer to that would be because I, Devils existed as prey and I existed as predator. Now I was prey. And I was running for my life.

I crashed through the undergrowth I couldn't hear her paws hit the ground behind me but I knew she was there.

She was there, running, intelligent ruthless eyes watching me, analyzing me, she was sprinting behind and as she calculated his own moves, she evaluated my motives.

I ran as fast as my legs would take me, I was -for the time being- running blind. I ran wherever my legs would take me.

With my heart hammering mallet blows at my chest and with my brain racing out of sheer panic, I could barely think let alone plan my escape routes.

The tiger knew this, she knew how fast my heart was pounding, she knew how many breaths I was taking in this minute, she knew how little I was in control of myself, she knew how afraid I was, she could smell the fear off me.

That made me more afraid, I could not only feel her sheer raw power behind me, but I could feel it grip my mind, control it the way she liked, the way she wanted.

I was trying to outrun a big cat, this was hard but not impossible, she messed up in her short burst, this meant that she was not an experienced hunter; she wasn't young nor was she old. So the chances for me to escape were sixty five percent. The chances of me to escape by running blind were a disastrous thirty percent.

I am in trouble.

Sure, you figured that out.

I got a grip on some part of my brain and opened my memories, I knew this area, I also realized where I was unconsciously heading, I was heading to this small clearing, the one where I had big long tough trees, trees which I could climb. Not the pathetic ones I was passing. These could barely support a raven let alone something like me.

Problem number two, she was catching up, I am so going to lose this fight.

Losing was not an option; if I did lose that meant that I would end up in her stomach.

Problem number three, I was getting tired.

Found the clearing just as her jaws snapped at the air molecules that were located behind my ankles.

I was no longer tired; I was recharged by the overwhelming feeling of out of control terror.

The clearing was a few meters away, I could see it slightly, the vegetation was very dense.

The tiger had tripped, the effect of trying to bite off my ankle and getting a kick in the face sent one of her paws slipping off a rock she was trying to grip. She crashed to the ground.

She wouldn't stay there for long!

In to the clearing! The trees! And whaa?

The Andalites? My friends out of morph? An Andalite fighter behind them?

"Devils," Max said, sounding annoyed, "We told you to stay as back up not wallow in the mud! Look at you you're filthy, and you are a complete mess!"

I had tripped and was at a crouch, staring at my friends. And at the Andalites.

They started to say some more but I was not listening. I was panting, trying to figure out what-

"Devils! We were talking to you-"

I sprang off the ground. And filling my place was the tiger, she was so fast she moved with an accuracy not known to man. But a few things about cats, I raised a lot of them. And I was in good shape.

"What the!" Julian yelped.

ROOOOOOOOOOARRRRRRR!

She was behind me, I felt her. She mimicked my moves. Whenever I

turned left, she turned left as well, when I turned right she turned right as well, I couldn't throw her off my tail!

She was tagging me!

I didn't want to get her killed! I bolted up a tree. But I was too slow, too slow. I felt sharp claws dig in one of my legs, she yanked down hard. She ripped my and at the same time got me to lost my grip. I fell.

"Arrrrrrrrghhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!" I screeched.

She was all over me, biting snarlind. I got away form her grip but she bolted behind me, then moved in front of me, reared up and gave me a back hand blow that knocked the stars out of the sky.

I hit the ground. She leap at me, claws outstretched.

I didn't want to d it, I didn't want to kill her!

But what? Should I let her kill me?

I grabbed my dagger and as she fell on me, I cut open her neck before she had time to do the same to mine.

My dagger cut I deep, I swear it scrapped her spinal cord.

She collapsed, and lay sprawled on the ground. Blood that looked black red formed a mask round her closed eyes.

No.

What had I done?

I went pale. I would never have killed a cat like that. What is happing to me?

Serves her right, I never asked for her to kill me.

I bellowed a threat to the dark forest; birds stirred, flew and settled down. Squirrels and chipmunks raced to their trees, rabbits jumped to their holes. A lone fox decided it was a good idea to end the day he retreated to his den.

I felt agitated, my muscled twitch out of control, the after effects of a killing frenzy, or the fight for survival.

"Devils?" Guttani asked, "Are you okay?"

The Andalites were shocked; they stared at the dead animal then at me. Stripped out of any natural weapon I managed to kill the beast using a 'primitive' weapon.

Let'em call it primitive, it does it's work just fine.

My attention was at the cat, the beast was dead as far as I could see. I leaned down towards it. I stared at its face. Then at it's markings.

I knew this tiger, that was Shimbala, she was not a man eater, so why

did she attack? I looked at her, she was well fed. And the way she attacked me was certainly a hunt. If she was being defensive about her territory she would have wanted to avoid an attack, so she would have to make as much sound as she could while she walked, then the trespasser (that would be me by the way) would know she was there.

No, this was not a defensive attack, this was a hunt. She attacked me from behind, the way any tiger would choose to kill a human for dinnerâ€¦

I started to walk back to where I had been sitting, before I got attacked. My friends did not ask any questions, strangely, the Andalites followed silently, maybe they were curious. I knew that my friends were.

I came back to finish off what I had started, I could not just kill Shimbala and ignore the after effects.

I stood in where I thought the tiger was standing before she charged, I traced back her paw-prints, after a few yards or so, I did not need to track her prints. I found what I wanted, actually, I heard what I was looking for.

It would not have taken a male tiger that long to find them, nor would it have taken an other predator long.

I had been taking my time, I was stalling, wishing that I had guessed wrong.

But I hadn't.

"Devils? What are you doing? Look-" Jake started.

I said nothing, I just pointed.

Tumbling out of their hide out, making lots of noise where two tiger cubs. I had the urge to murder them and the urge to take care of them.

They looked at me with blue eyes, and their gaze locked into mine.

I walked up to them and they came to me, sniffing me and checking me out.

Once they decided that I was okay. I started to move out in the forest and dense under growth. After a few minutes of hesitation the followed.

Although the cubs had took a whiff of there mother's blood, they paid no attention, they were after all young and raised by a parent that had no fear o humans and had an experience with them. Why fear?

As I walked away from my friends, the two orphans followed, I headed to the Kanagers base, to the Bustan. Hoping that one of the tiger sisters would accept to adopt the young litter.

It would be a shame to see the two beauties go to waste.

A big shame.

I felt the eyes of my friends and the Andalites follow me. And glancing back I saw Tobias and Cassie nod in unison.

The rest were baffled.

End
file.